bGordon E-4, 5 (no date) 1907 ART Khasi ART

"Ka," short for *kiaw* (grandmother), and *ba*, mother. *Ka Iawbei* is the primeval ancestress of the clan. She is to the Khasis what the "tribal mother" was to old Celtic and Teutonic genealogists, and we have an interesting parallel to the reverence of the Khasis for *Ka Iawbei* in the Celtic goddess Brigit, the tribal mother of the Brigantes. Later on, like Ka Iawbei, she was canonized, and became St. Bridget."

The greater number of the flat table-stones we see in front of the standing monoliths in these hills are erected in honour of *Ka Iawbei*. In former times, it was the custom to offer food to her on these stones. In cases of family quarrels, or dissensions amongst the members of the same clan, which it is desired to bring to a peaceful settlement, it is customary to perform a sacrifice to the first mother, "*Ka Iawbei*." They first of all take an augury by breaking eggs, and if it appears from the broken egg-shells that *Ka Iawbei* is offended, they offer to her a cotton cloth, and sacrifice a hen. To them ceremonious invocations are muttered, and a small drum, called, "*Ka 'ding ding ding*," is beaten. It is not unlikely that the Khasi homeboli deities, *Ka bi ding* and *Ka kong ka jingrem*, to whom pujas are offered for the welfare of the home, are also *Ka Iawbei* in disguise. Notwithstanding the strong influence of the missionaries, we find that U Thawlang, the first father and the husband of *Ka Iawbei*, is also revered. To him on occasion of domestic trouble a cock is sacrificed, and a *jingkieng* or chocolate cat is offered. This puja is called *kata tep Thawlang*, i.e. covering the gratification. The following invocation to U Thawlang is then chanted — "Oh, father Thawlang, who hast enabled us to be born, who hast given us my stature and my life, I have wronged thee, oh father, be not offended, for I have given thee a pledge and a sign, i.e. a red and white chocolate cat. Do not deliver us into the power of (the goddess of) illness, I have offered thee the propitiatory — oh that thou mayest carry us in thine arms, and that I may be aware of thee, my father Thawlang." We see clearly from the above prayer that the Khasi idea is that the spirit of the deceased male ancestor is capable of

* But Darwin says on "mother age civilization."

a) at the mes eting (first burial).
b) at the mes phou (second burial).
c) at the mes teh (third burial).

10. The sacrifice in memory of the deceased:
a) the sacrifice at the end of a month,
b) the sacrifice at the end of a year.

These various sacrifices can be offered by the official lyngoba as well as by other lyngoba or even by ordinary men from the people, provided they know precisely the ritual which governs the family concerned and are guided by it.

A definite spiritual attitude is not required for any sacrifice. There is only one exception here: namely at the sacrifice for the third and last burial of the house in the mes teh. This may only be carried out if all relatives of the ets concerned are living in peace with each other. This must be established by the lyngoba himself who is performing the sacrifice. If any kind of enmity or a quarrel is discovered by the investigation, the burial and the sacrifice that goes with it must be postponed until the condition of general peace in the family is fulfilled.

As concerns the place of the sacrifices, the areas may be divided in the following way:

1. Sacrifice is made in the hut:
at the same giving,
after recovering health.

2. Sacrifice is made in the courtyard in front of the hut:
when questioning spirits,
before important business,
in cases of sickness,
state basis,
in case of death.

3. Sacrifice is made away from the house:
at a cemetery at the place it occurs,
at the three different burials of the house at the places where they occur.

bungler!" (27) When the opponent also and

27. P.D. Bohnhole, "Das Pfeilschiessen der Ehoei" [Arrow Shooting Among the Ehoe], Salvatorianische Mitteilungen [Salvatorian Communications], 1910, No. 2.

shouts they shout at him: "Im ikpoko, ima ahimpi i.e., eat earth, eat sand" (the opponent's arrow is supposed to fly into the earth or sand). There is ample opportunity here for talking extemporaneously as the Ehoei so love to do. Following the examples mentioned above they shout at the archers of their own team or of the opponents' team. At the same time I have never noticed that anybody felt insulted or that quarrels and fights ever arose. If somebody feels affected by the remarks, he or one of his team tries to overthrow his opponent by a really potent remark. If that is successful everybody rejoices in the moment and the round of shooting continues peacefully. When a round of ten or more archers who have each shot three or more arrows is finished, the judge enters the closed-off place and counts out loud the arrows sticking in the target. With a great hullabaloo the crowd confirms the number of hits; the opponents do the same and then the contest begins again with all the [illegible] action described above. When this process has been repeated often, a longer pause occurs. During this, and often during the shorter recess after each round, the women and girls hand out refreshments. The water pipe enters the rounds and no one enters prelims. This is continues till

Because of her whole position as guardian of the inherited religion and customs, it is not frequent that such a woman breaks with the ancestral cult. If this does happen, it does not necessarily mean that she loses the entire property. That depends really on the position the other members of the family take. If they are all still firm heathens, who wish to have nothing to do with Christianity, they can force the clan mother to give everything up. The high respect for her is frequently so great, however, that either the whole clan or at least a part of it decides to take the same way and change religions with the clan mother. The part that remains heathen will certainly propose a division of the family property. This is also possible in other cases.

4. Division of the Family Property.

Although it is rare, the wish and vow of a family-clan can require that a family-clan be split into two clans /Clan/ and that a division of the common property be undertaken. The basis for this is if the family /Gwatlaxla/ becomes too big, if the elders in the family council /Sik/ are no longer united and have and revenge threaten to destroy, if a part of the clan /Clan/ tries to seize the heritage inside by violence and refuses to deliver the heritage for the common need, if one branch has brought the whole clan /Gigya/ dishonor and shame by false oaths, incest, revenge, treachery or some other severe crime. Only the guilty party will be excluded from the clan /Clan/ in such cases, if he remains stubborn and impenitent. But if he begs for forgiveness with his lips and participates in the expiatory sacrifice, forgiveness will not be refused him. But a certain bitterness and bad feeling often remain behind.

In the conversion to another religion, it often depends on how the clan mother and also the family elders are inclined towards the religion in question, and also on who is changing religions. If it is only brothers, sons, nephews, or grandsons, of the clan mother, a division is out of the question, since the men are not capable of inheriting. But if it is the youngest or next youngest daughter or even the eldest of the clan mother, then a division of property can be undertaken. A clan mother after all is so attached to her child or her nearest blood relatives that she would not like to push them entirely away from herself since she sees completely set against the religion in question and angered. If that should be so in individual cases, the heirs concerned still consider, whether it is not more advisable to wait to change her religion until the clan mother has closed her eyes and she then has free play. Then that which was mentioned at the conclusion of the previous section [illegible].